United Nations A/60/588

General Assembly

Distr.: General
13 December 2005

Original: English

Sixtieth session
Agenda items 32, 132 and 136

Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the review of military involvement in civil assistance in peacekeeping operations

Summary

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) observed that in general the military components of peacekeeping operations earnestly assist humanitarian organizations and agencies when such support is requested. Furthermore, most contingents that carry out community support projects are not only focused on pragmatically building good relationships with the local population or generating positive publicity but are genuinely committed to improving the living conditions of and making a positive contribution to their host communities. However, OIOS found that the quality and effectiveness of those activities varied greatly and, in some instances, led to unintended consequences that hampered support for humanitarian organizations and agencies and confidence-building with the local population.

To address the current shortcomings, effective military involvement in civil assistance should begin with coherent planning and strategy development. The provision of support to humanitarian activities requires early coordinated planning to ensure that adequate resources and coordination capacity are available to carry out effective support tasks, such as infrastructure work. Support for local communities should be based on a clear strategy and an understanding of the needs of the affected population in order to achieve mission objectives and complement other civil activities in an area of operations. Therefore, thorough consultation and coordination with humanitarian organizations and agencies is necessary to identify the highest impact projects based on the needs of the local population and to avoid duplication

05-64122 (E) 060106

and irrelevant or conflicting activities. In particular, existing coordination and liaison functions, such as the civil-military coordination positions staffed by military and civilian personnel in peacekeeping operations, need to be strengthened and better aligned. Furthermore, the development, revision, distribution and follow-up of relevant policies are needed to ensure that the military component has a clear understanding of what proper military involvement in civil assistance entails and how the military can make a positive contribution to the affected population and support the mission as a whole. Adequate resources and personnel qualified to provide support to humanitarian activities or local communities are needed to make military involvement more effective. OIOS has made 12 recommendations to address the issues discussed in the present report. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has agreed to all the recommendations and has already started to implement some of them.

Contents

		Paragraphs
I.	Introduction	1–3
II.	Findings	4–27
	A. Strategy and planning	9–12
	B. Coordination	13–19
	C. Policy guidance	20–22
	D. Support and resources	23–27
III.	Conclusion	28
IV.	Recommendations	29–41

I. Introduction

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) reviewed military involvement in civil assistance (MICA) in United Nations peacekeeping operations with specific focus on the support to humanitarian activities and community support projects (CSPs) conducted by the military components of peacekeeping operations.[1] Along with its primary task of provision of security, MICA became a common activity of the military component in all missions owing to realities on the ground in recent conflicts, which have led to the broadening of contemporary peacekeeping mandates in the context of multidimensional peace operations and national and multinational (non-United Nations) military doctrines that encourage the military to support local communities in an area of operations. Increased MICA put on the agenda issues regarding the coordination of such assistance with overall mission objectives and the enhancement of its effectiveness and efficiency, which the present report addresses in four subject areas. The findings and recommendations of OIOS are based on surveys of humanitarian and military personnel in the field, analyses of existing research, policies and relevant oversight studies, and extensive interviews conducted in New York and in the field.[2]

Page
3
4
5
6
8
10
12
13

2. Notwithstanding the ongoing discussions on "humanitarian space" and the challenges of integrated missions, the primary interest of OIOS was in pragmatic and practical ways and means to foster a positive impact of MICA within the peacekeeping framework and resources. OIOS structured its analysis of MICA along two major activities: (a) military support to humanitarian organizations and agencies (HOAs); and (b) CSPs executed by the military. The two areas of MICA differ in that the support for humanitarian activities is provided on request from HOAs, whereas CSPs are generally initiated and carried out by the military component itself. OIOS noted the insistence of HOAs that CSPs should not be confused with or characterized as humanitarian activities. In order for HOAs to maintain their freedom of movement, operational ability and the confidence of their beneficiaries, they must be perceived as independent from the armed forces, particularly if the latter become militarily engaged with belligerents either in self-defence or under a Chapter VII mandate. Cognizant of this concern and of the fact that the term "humanitarian" is based on a well-defined set of internationally accepted criteria, OIOS will maintain this dichotomy throughout the report. OIOS believes it is equally important that mission military contingents are aware of and observe this distinction.

3. The comments of management were sought on the draft report and taken into account. Where appropriate, they are set out in italics in the body of the report.

[1] For purposes of the present report, MICA did not include activities related to civil and political affairs, human rights, demining, child protection or disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

[2] In-depth interviews with focus groups, document analyses and site visits were conducted in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). Additional interviews and document analyses were undertaken in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The review was conducted between April and November 2005.

OIOS greatly appreciates the cooperation extended to it by the military and civilian management and staff in the field and in New York during the review.

II. Findings

4. With regard to the first category of MICA, OIOS noted that the most frequent request from HOAs for military support was for information pertaining to security conditions on the ground. Next, and equally important, were requests for escorts and logistics, followed by infrastructure support and direct support in distributing relief assistance. Such requests are usually made in exceptional circumstances and as a last resort when either the security situation so dictates or the resources of HOAs are insufficient to meet a critical need.

5. Security information is the most sought after and common form of support to HOAs because the military component is uniquely positioned and equipped to gather, synthesize and analyse security and other pertinent information on conditions prevailing on the ground. OIOS observed, however, that the extent and usefulness of information given to HOAs varied greatly, and that in certain missions HOAs were dissatisfied with its reliability and content. The level of satisfaction was higher regarding the response by military components to requests from HOAs for escorts and logistic support, with some exceptions, including instances where HOA guidelines were not followed. OIOS noted that assets such as air transport or engineering are not necessarily under the control of the military component and could be under mission authority, and that the support for HOAs with those assets varied widely across missions. OIOS observed that in some instances, requests from HOAs could not be fulfilled for reasons such as priority access and unresolved cost recovery arrangements.

6. With regard to the second category of MICA, the most common projects implemented by contingents in direct support of local communities were medical assistance (in at least 10 missions), followed by the distribution of food and water (9 missions), clothing and supplies (8 missions) and transportation of the local population (8 missions). The organization of cultural or educational events (in 6 missions) was last on the list. For example, one Mission reported during a given month that it had provided medical treatment to about 600 local civilians, distributed food to 115 local families, worked with a local community to repair a water pump, worked with international organizations to repair roads and conducted nine sports and recreational activities. Those activities by the military component were intended to support local communities in order to foster good relationships and consequently to minimize the risk of hostile acts. They also facilitated better understanding by the military of the local security environment and increased opportunities to receive relevant information.

7. While CSPs are funded mostly through provisions from troop-contributing countries to their respective contingents, resources are in some instances also sought by contingents through funding for quick-impact projects. Quick-impact projects account for a small percentage of a mission's budget, and in some cases, proceeds from a separate trust fund are used to conduct small-scale projects (usually $25,000 maximum per project) to improve the quality of life of the local population and help establish the credibility of a new mission. Quick-impact projects, which are vetted in a review process managed by each mission, have enabled them to finance projects

such as the rehabilitation of educational and health facilities, the improvement of sanitation and infrastructure, and the provision of technical training. In 2005, there were 475 quick-impact projects in nine missions, with about $600,000 to $1 million available in each mission from the assessed budgets.

8. CSPs received positive feedback from HOAs when the military component used its comparative advantages, such as the capability to use engineering equipment for infrastructure and reconstruction projects or medical expertise and facilities, as well as when it engaged with the community through cultural and sports events. However, OIOS noted that in some instances other CSPs had been criticized by HOAs for their unforeseen, misguided, controversial or, at times, negative impact, especially in missions under a Chapter VII mandate.

A. Strategy and planning

9. As described above, military components contribute to achieving mission mandates, such as facilitating the provision of humanitarian assistance by responding to requests from HOAs (e.g., providing escorts and logistic support) and through information sharing and other coordinated activities. The provision of such support requires that the mission have both an effective civil-military coordination and liaison function dealing with requests from HOAs and the capability to provide military escorts and logistic and engineering support.

10. OIOS noted, however, that such support from the military component is often not mentioned in relevant planning documents and preparatory mission reports, and consequently is not included in corresponding budget requests. Therefore, such support tasks are not factored into the budget allocated for the primary mandate of the military component — the provision of security. Consequently, in cases where the military is fully engaged in implementing its core mandate, it cannot provide adequate support to humanitarian activities. OIOS observed that the integrated mission planning processes and types of integrated mission task forces, such as working groups aimed at bringing partners outside the Department of Peacekeeping Operations into the planning of missions, so far have not incorporated the planning of military components' support for humanitarian activities. OIOS is of the view that recent efforts by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to review the mission planning process could benefit from including HOAs in the discussions to ensure that their perspective is considered when planning for the military component of future missions.

11. At the same time, HOAs do not always engage proactively with the Department during mission planning or in regular mandate reviews. As a result, such exercises lack information needed to determine how the operations of HOAs could benefit from military support in different areas. One factor hampering more harmonized planning is that key HOAs, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization, develop plans and strategies within their headquarters and in regional/country offices, while planning for peacekeeping operations is done by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in New York or in the missions themselves.

12. OIOS observed weaknesses in strategy at the mission level for civil-military coordination and liaison in general, and concerning CSPs implemented by the contingents in particular. CSPs were almost always planned at the contingent level

instead of being built into an overall strategy in support of the mission objective with an identified target population, place and plan. The lack of strategic alignment of CSPs with mission objectives was especially apparent when the contingent approach to CSPs was supply driven and correlated with neither the essential needs of the local population nor the overall humanitarian and development effort in an area. The underlying reasons were that at times CSPs had been based on what contingents had available rather than on the priority needs of the population on the ground. Finally, attempts to strategically plan for CSPs were complicated by late deployments of the relevant staff officers to missions, which excluded them from the initial phase of in-mission planning.

B. Coordination

13. The main military entity responsible for coordinating MICA is the civil-military coordination and liaison function at force headquarters. This function may exist either as a branch within force headquarters or as a unit within the Operations Branch. Staff officers responsible for civil-military coordination and liaison at force headquarters are primarily tasked with advising the Force Commander on civil-military issues and operations and participating in coordination mechanisms. This function is mirrored at sector headquarters, which also transmits information from contingents to force headquarters. At the contingent level, designated officers for civil-military coordination, if appointed, coordinate with civilian entities and the sector headquarters and facilitate the execution of CSPs.

14. OIOS noted that coordination between force headquarters, sector headquarters and contingents does not consistently occur with regard to CSPs. Although staff officers for civil-military coordination and liaison are expected to supervise and participate in the planning of CSPs, they are, in the vast majority of cases, kept informed only after a project has been completed. Therefore, opportunities to coordinate and promote such projects within overall mission efforts and to improve project implementation were not consistently utilized.

15. United Nations military observers often provide good suggestions for CSPs and quick-impact projects due to their proximity to local communities. However, different reporting lines are not conducive to the consistent communication of such information to the civil-military coordination function in either sector or force headquarters. Although OIOS recognizes that different reporting lines are unavoidable, and even necessary when individual units function independently, and acknowledges the efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to integrate reporting by the military at the force headquarters level, this has yet to be achieved in all missions.

16. Besides the necessity for close coordination within the military component, proper coordination and liaison with the humanitarian community through the humanitarian coordinator or his/her representative would help contingents to concentrate on projects with the highest impact, to address the needs of the target population and, most of all, to harmonize their initiatives with the overall humanitarian and rehabilitation activities in an area. However, such coordination rarely occurs with regard to CSPs. Lack of coordination may lead to grave consequences, as pointed out by HOAs, especially when contingents provide direct assistance to the local population in situations of peace enforcement and combat, in

that other parties to the conflict and the beneficiaries may be neither willing nor able to differentiate between assistance provided by the military and that provided by humanitarian agencies.[3] This very serious concern makes close consultation between the military component and HOAs essential to ensure that lives are not endangered and that access to the affected population remains open. Nevertheless, OIOS observed that CSPs are generally approved by contingent commanders, sometimes in consultation with the Force Commander, but rarely in consultation with the humanitarian coordinator or his/her representative, even though such projects may have a serious impact on humanitarian activities. OIOS acknowledges recent initiatives to revise the guidelines on the relations between representatives of the Secretary-General, resident coordinators and humanitarian coordinators and the Department's civil-military coordination policy to address the issue of effective coordination for "hearts and minds" activities (i.e., CSPs) and quick-impact projects and expects that dissemination of those instructions to all levels of command will establish a functional and clear coordination mechanism. In that connection, OIOS would like to emphasize that those instructions should allow for a realistic degree of flexibility for national contingents concerning CSPs.

17. OIOS noted the efforts by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to improve coordination through the deployment of civilian staff to function as civil-military coordination officers. There are currently three such officers deployed in the context of missions, two by the Department and one by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, working with slightly different terms of reference. However, their roles are not well understood, and there is often a lack of consensus between the military and civilian components and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs regarding their terms of reference and responsibilities. In one such case, the main reason for confusion was that the civil-military coordination function, staffed with a civil-military coordinator officer, had been initially established by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs with a focus on advising the humanitarian coordinator, while the incoming mission had set up a similar coordination and liaison function using the same terms of reference, effectively creating a duplicate position. Subsequently, the coordination function of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs disappeared, and while keeping the same title, the officer was now advising not only the humanitarian coordinator but also the military component. Consequently, conflicts about specific responsibilities and areas of authority arose with the staff officers of the military component. Confusion was compounded by the use of the same titles for those functions currently carried out by civilian and military personnel. In order to avoid the duplication of efforts, OIOS is of the view that whenever a civil-military coordination function is already in place before the establishment of a mission, close consultation between the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is required to determine the appropriate location and responsibilities of the relevant personnel in the new context and to ensure that there is no conflict in terms of reference, job descriptions, or titles or the relationships between military and civilian personnel responsible for civil-military coordination within and outside the mission.

[3] See Inter-Agency Standing Committee reference paper on civil-military relationships in complex emergencies, June 2004, para. 43.

18. While the civil-military coordination officer primarily serves the HOAs, in particular by providing support to the humanitarian coordinator, OIOS observed that there is a need for ongoing professional advice to missions, especially the military component, on the implementation of CSPs and on the interaction and coordination between the military component and HOAs. Within the current structure, neither the civilian civil-military coordination officer nor the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator has the authority to make decisions or instruct and advise the military component, which, in some instances, has not welcomed such advice, particularly on CSPs. Although initiatives by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in conjunction with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, to provide briefings to incoming Force Commanders and Heads of Mission during their induction are certainly very useful and may address some crucial issues regarding CSPs and quick-impact projects, those are one-time events that occur before the immediate need arises for advice in a specific situation. In addition, while staff officers with experience in civil-military coordination or exposure to relevant training courses may be well equipped to offer advice on military aspects of civil-military coordination, the effectiveness of CSPs implemented by the military component would benefit from complementary input from professionals with experience in humanitarian affairs, rehabilitation and development. Additionally, the lack of civilian personnel within the civil-military coordination branch at force headquarters may hamper coordination efforts, given the differences between military and civilian culture and the need to engage with the complicated network of civilian actors conducting humanitarian activities. OIOS therefore believes that a joint civil-military coordination unit in the mission headquarters could effectively address the current shortcomings in coordination and ensure that CSPs are in line with the overall humanitarian programme and advance mission objectives.

19. With regard to the coordination of requests for support from HOAs to the military component, OIOS noted that because of confusion on the part of HOAs over where and how to request mission assistance, such requests were communicated through a number of different channels, sometimes directly to contingent commanders. As a result, at times the military received unfiltered and unprioritized requests without having had the capacity to evaluate their relative importance. OIOS also observed that some HOAs had unrealistic expectations about the support to be expected from missions, especially with regard to movement of personnel and cargo requests. The approval processes for such requests, lacking full transparency, were not helpful either. All this indicates to OIOS that to make coordination mechanisms reliable, it is essential to have well-known points of contact and clear authorization channels and procedures for dealing with requests for support. It is equally important for all such information to be readily available and well publicized and for the established arrangements to be consistently followed.

C. Policy guidance

20. The civil-military coordination policy of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was formulated in 2002 as binding for all missions. It outlined relevant principles and staffing and training requirements. The policy is currently being updated in collaboration with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian

Affairs. OIOS observed that because of deficient distribution and enforcement of the 2002 policy, it is unknown to contingent commanders and at force headquarters. Other guiding documents prepared by the Department, such as Force Commander directives, refer only briefly to the civil-military coordination policy and matters relevant to MICA. Consequently, the national and multinational (non-United Nations) military policies that are followed by contingents in some missions do not necessarily agree with the Department's policy and vary significantly from each other, while in other instances there is no policy at all in place. The failure to apply an existing policy to missions has created a lack of conceptual consensus and led to misconceptions about MICA and the civil-military coordination function. There are also guidance documents prepared by HOAs, aimed primarily at the humanitarian community, that address the issue of military support for humanitarian activities, but they are not easily usable by the peacekeeping force and not binding for missions. Although beyond the immediate scope of this review, there is an additional need to provide peacekeeping forces with a comprehensive civil-military coordination policy (or a compendium of mutually coherent policies) covering various types of interactions between civilians and the military in multidimensional peacekeeping operations, such as human rights, civil affairs, political affairs and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, that need to address a set of issues different from those relating only to humanitarian activities in their narrow sense.

21. Within a proper guidance system, a central policy prepared at Headquarters that outlines the Department's position on, objectives for, and/or approach to important issues or activities in United Nations peacekeeping operations should be translated into specific standard operating procedures or similar documents that provide actionable instructions for those implementing tasks at different levels of command. However, with few exceptions, OIOS was not made aware of such instructions aimed at the tactical level relevant to MICA. Other guidance material originating at the mission level, such as that on concepts of operations and military campaign plans, did not specify how contingents should approach crucial activities in implementing MICA-related tasks but only provided a broader framework for the military component. OIOS believes that it is necessary to translate the revised version of the Department's civil-military coordination policy into standard operating procedures for different levels of military command and national contingents in order to provide guidance on how to implement MICA. There is a need for such standard operating procedures to provide clear instructions on: (a) how to interact with HOAs during their operations in an emergency/crisis situation or while conducting CSPs; (b) how to conduct CSPs (e.g., developing strategy, identifying appropriate projects, prioritizing, planning, executing, evaluating and publicizing); (c) when coordination is required and with whom (such as HOAs, local communities and authorities); (d) the type of information that should be shared with whom and how; (e) what donations are appropriate and the funding mechanisms for such projects (regarding financial ceilings, acceptable items and the identification of distribution mechanisms); and (f) discouragement of the military component's use of the term "humanitarian" to describe CSPs. Currently, the mission-level guidance material is often developed after significant delays, and the nomenclature used in such guidance documents is inconsistent. OIOS acknowledges the current efforts of the Department to update and improve its guidance system and believes that the correction of those shortcomings should be part of it.

22. OIOS noted the existence of a number of guidelines on quick-impact projects and acknowledges recent efforts by the Department and peacekeeping operations to review the guidelines and address previous OIOS recommendations, especially with regard to the duration of the implementation of quick-impact projects and their evaluation. However, OIOS observed that contingents were at times not aware of what types of projects to submit and that they frequently had difficulty in administering them. In some instances, knowledge about the availability of funding for quick-impact projects was inconsistent throughout missions, the military and civilian components were confused about their roles and responsibilities in managing quick-impact projects, and the selection of projects often did not follow a clear strategy or take target beneficiaries into consideration. Such confusion is caused primarily by the nature of current guidelines available to missions that outline procedures on how to set up approval committees and processes for quick-impact projects and a list of possible intervention areas, but that lack instructions relating to the more programmatic aspects of quick-impact projects, such as (a) the need for a mission-specific strategy and corresponding selection criteria; (b) the proper implementation and management of projects according to phases and responsibilities; (c) ways to promote quick-impact projects within and outside the mission; and (d) the necessity to evaluate projects and record and disseminate lessons learned.

D. Support and resources

23. The Department's capacity to provide advice and support to missions on MICA is very limited. Although liaison officers in the Military Division are extremely dedicated to the issue, they are covering a range of other activities and their job descriptions do not include support for peacekeeping operations on MICA or civil-military coordination. OIOS observed that mission staff did not always know where in the Department to seek advice on MICA. At the same time, OIOS noted that the Civil-military Coordination Section and Policy Development and Studies Branch of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs play important roles by providing advice about civil-military coordination to mission staff, especially for those who have participated in civil-military coordination training and built informal networks to share experiences and advice. The Civil-military Coordination Section and its network of former trainees (including those who completed training programmes offered by other institutions, such as the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes) could be further developed with the support of the Department into an established resource for the provision of continuous advice to civilian and military staff deployed in missions regarding the humanitarian dimension of MICA. For this to succeed, close interaction between the Civil-military Coordination Section, and the Policy Development and Studies Branch and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on the issue of MICA is essential. It is equally important that chiefs of the civil-military coordination branches at force headquarters complete the civil-military coordination training as required by the revised policy of the Department.

24. At the mission level, OIOS noted that a shortage of qualified personnel is making it difficult to effectively manage MICA. In some instances, contingents were deployed without a civil-military coordination officer. Instead, personnel were often assigned to that function on an ad hoc basis, with that role being assumed in

addition to their existing responsibilities. In some instances, OIOS found that staff officers at force headquarters and officers at the contingent level lacked the proper qualifications for civil-military coordination because the Department's mission force headquarters job descriptions for civil-military coordination, troop-contributing country guidelines or the relevant generic memorandums of understanding did not require prior experience in civil-military coordination. Furthermore, relevant training requirements that would compensate to a certain degree for the lack of experience are also not reflected in the above-mentioned documents. In addition, staff officers and contingent-level officers often have not been provided with a sufficient number of vehicles, communications devices, digital cameras, business cards and other essentials to be fully effective in civil-military coordination.

Training material

25. Together with HOAs, the Department's Integrated Training Service developed a basic pre-deployment training content for United Nations peacekeepers on civil-military coordination and humanitarian assistance. Although the training material is highly instructive and provides a description of how the military component can support humanitarian activities, it requires updating and does not sufficiently clarify the role of the military component in conducting CSPs and quick-impact projects. More detail on such projects is provided, for example, in the draft standard training module level 2, module 6, which targets staff officers. However, contingent or unit-level officers are usually not exposed to the standard training module level 2, although they should be provided with the same material covered in it since it is relevant for the proper implementation of CSPs. Finally, a clear understanding by senior military personnel of United Nations policy on civil-military coordination is essential. While the draft mission senior leaders course includes a module on humanitarian affairs that briefly addresses the topic of civil-military coordination as one of seven areas, it does not dedicate adequate detail to explain sufficiently the Department's civil-military coordination policy and the role of the military component in conducting CSPs, especially since they are not covered in the military operations module. Furthermore, additional modules on civil-military coordination, CSPs and quick-impact projects would make it possible to address civil-military coordination issues that go beyond the humanitarian dimension and allow for the inclusion of relevant exercises.

26. At the mission level, the force headquarters provides standardized induction courses for contingents and staff officers that include civil-military coordination. However, in-mission training for the military component was in most cases conducted only by military officers, whereas instruction from experienced civilians would have been beneficial for the trainees. Furthermore, most of the training material reviewed by OIOS was not delivered to the designated participants in a timely fashion, was more descriptive than instructive, did not cover key required skills and knowledge (for example, in project management and administration of quick-impact projects), and varied significantly from mission to mission. Finally, OIOS noted that opportunities for exchanges of knowledge and experience and lessons learned in civil-military coordination within and between contingents were very limited, although such interaction would be a valuable addition to the more institutionalized training curriculum. This applied in particular to the implementation of CSPs, where a lack of consistent transfer of knowledge between

rotating contingents about projects at times caused difficulty in ensuring continuity and timeliness of project implementation.

Lessons learned and best practices

27. OIOS noted the valuable lessons-learned studies prepared in missions on civil-military coordination and quick-impact projects and the development of an informal network among various mission coordinators of quick-impact projects who exchange information and best practices horizontally. However, OIOS was only provided with such studies prepared in UNMEE, and they were rarely known in other missions. Although the Peacekeeping Best Practices Section of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations made an effort to improve the availability of such studies, specific categories on civil-military coordination or quick-impact projects do not exist on its website, and the relevant lessons-learned documents were not included under either the humanitarian or military categories. OIOS observed that the existing documents were neither further synthesized to make them universally applicable nor utilized to identify current gaps or opportunities for policy refinements. Furthermore, OIOS found that the results of CSPs and quick-impact projects were not reviewed systematically with sound evaluation methodologies at the mission level by either the military or civilian components. The evaluation of such projects should have included an assessment of whether quick-impact projects and other community support efforts were the most appropriate means to win the confidence of the population with the resources available. Finally, informally developed networks on quick-impact projects that facilitate the sharing of best practices did not seem to have adequate institutional support, such as the provision of space and a moderator on the peacekeeping best practices website for posting questions and answers and relevant insights directly accessible to mission personnel.

III. Conclusion

28. In most instances, the military components of peacekeeping operations earnestly support humanitarian activities and HOAs when their assistance is requested, and most contingents are committed to improving the living conditions of and making a positive contribution to their host communities. However, compassion and enthusiasm are not enough to ensure the effective and efficient outcomes of MICA. Without a coherent and comprehensive approach to planning and strategy, coordination, guidance and support, continued improvisation will hamper the capacity of military components to provide support to humanitarian activities and local communities. Since the CSPs implemented by contingents constitute an integral part of military operations, the challenge is to channel their commitment, vigour and resources in a direction that leads to a contribution to the larger mission objective and complements efforts by other actors. The current weaknesses in guidance to contingents on CSPs in missions, combined with instances of disappointing feedback, especially from HOAs, regarding the efforts of military components to support local communities need to be addressed in order to maximize the benefits of cooperation and synergy in the field. Considering the recent increase in productive discussions about integrated missions and civil-military coordination in missions, especially between the Department and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, OIOS is confident that the results of those discussions will

be translated into clear instructions for military components in the near future. The next challenge will be to build on the experience gained with military components providing support to humanitarian activities and to pursue appropriate changes that address military involvement in civil-assistance throughout the stages of a peacebuilding operation beyond the humanitarian emergency phase. Such efforts will equally require a comprehensive approach that takes into account implications for planning, strategy, coordination, guidance and support.

IV. Recommendations[4]

29. The Department responded that it *agrees and supports each recommendation. It is already taking steps to implement some of those recommendations, which are quite practical and could form a support basis for some of the Department's policy initiatives.*

Recommendation 1

30. The Department should ensure that at the appropriate stages of mission planning, including assessment missions and mandate review processes, opportunities for the military component to support humanitarian organizations and agencies are identified and considered in consultation with relevant partners (paras. 10 and 11 above) (SP-05-002-001).

Recommendation 2

31. The Department should ensure that appropriate mission-level planning documents include a strategy for community support projects that takes into account the needs of the population on the ground and overall mission objectives. Such a strategy should be prepared in consultation with humanitarian organizations and agencies (para. 12) (SP-05-002-002).

Recommendation 3

32. The Department should provide missions with clear guidance on effective coordination concerning community support projects and quick-impact projects both within the military component and between the military component and humanitarian organizations and agencies (paras. 14-16) (SP-05-002-003).

Recommendation 4

33. The Department, jointly with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, should review the terms of reference and structural location of civilian officers responsible for civil-military coordination in missions with a view to enhancing their effectiveness and avoiding duplication (paras. 17 and 18) (SP-05-002-004).

[4] The symbols in parentheses in this section refer to an internal code used by OIOS for recording recommendations.

Recommendation 5

34. Peacekeeping operations should inform humanitarian organizations and agencies in the mission area that their requests for military support should be submitted to a specific point of contact, such as the joint civil-military coordination unit, who should be tasked with prioritizing such requests from a humanitarian perspective and forwarding them to the military component for action through the proper channels. When necessary, such submission points could be established for different levels of command or for different areas within the mission. The Department should ensure that such arrangements are implemented in all missions (para. 19) (SP-05-002-005).

Recommendation 6

35. The Department should promulgate its revised policy on civil-military coordination by directive from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and ensure that it is fully reflected in all other relevant guidance material, including troop-contributing country guidelines and Force Commander directives. The policy should be widely available in print and electronic versions and serve as the basis for the preparation of a generic standard operating procedure, aimed at different levels of command to cover interaction between humanitarian organizations and agencies and the military in the field and the implementation of community support projects (paras. 20 and 21) (SP-05-002-006).

Recommendation 7

36. The Department should complement the current terms of reference for quick-impact projects issued by the Controller with additional instructions on the preparation of mission-specific strategies and on the management, implementation and evaluation of quick-impact projects (para. 22) (SP-05-002-007).

Recommendation 8

37. In consultation with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Department should advise missions about their point of contact for advice on military involvement in civil-assistance (para. 23) (SP-05-002-008).

Recommendation 9

38. The Department should ensure that an adequate number of qualified personnel and a sufficient amount of support equipment (such as vehicles and other supplies) are provided to missions for an effective civil-military coordination function at force and sector headquarters and at the contingent level. In particular, the Department should include, at a minimum, a provision for prior training in civil-military coordination in the "qualifications required" section of updated mission force headquarters job descriptions and similarly amend the troop-contributing country guidelines and the "Capabilities" section of the personnel annex to generic memorandums of understanding to reflect qualification requirements for relevant military personnel as set out in its civil-military coordination policy (para. 24) (SP-05-002-009).

Recommendation 10

39. The Department should update the generic training module on civil-military coordination contained in the standard generic training module level 1 to include more detail on the role of the military component in implementing community support projects and quick-impact projects. Furthermore, the standard training module level 3 should contain separate modules on civil-military coordination, including community support projects and quick-impact projects (para. 25) (SP-05-002-010).

Recommendation 11

40. The Department should include in the job description of the chief civil-military coordination staff officer the responsibility for ensuring that in-mission training covering civil-military coordination is provided to relevant military personnel, including United Nations military observers, upon arrival in theatre, and that the standard training module 2-6 and the relevant material from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on civil-military coordination training are consistently used as a blueprint for such training. The job description should also include the responsibility to hold regular meetings and promote the exchange of information, including through the Intranet, between contingents, on civil-military coordination issues, and to ensure effective transfer of knowledge on military involvement in civil assistance between rotating contingents and within the force (para. 26) (SP-05-002-011).

Recommendation 12

41. The Department should institute a mechanism and designate responsibilities for recording, distilling and analysing lessons learned and best practices related to military involvement in civil assistance, including community support projects, and quick-impact projects, and distribute relevant studies, for example, through its website, an interactive database or a virtual community of practice (para. 27) (SP5-02-012).

(*Signed*) Inga-Britt **Ahlenius**
Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services